

SOUTH MOLTON
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

AND THE

Sanitary Inspector

FOR THE

Year ended December 31st, 1949

F. J. H. MARTIN,

M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (Lond.), D.P.H. (Oxon.),

Medical Officer of Health.

113, East Street,

South Molton,

June, 1950.

*To the Chairman and Members of the
South Molton Rural District Council.*

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Council.

*I have the honour to present the Annual Report
on the Health and Sanitary Administration of your
District for the year 1949.*

Your obedient Servant,

F. J. H. MARTIN,

M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (Lond.), D.P.H. (Oxon),

Medical Officer of Health.



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**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF
HEALTH FOR THE SOUTH MOLTON RURAL
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

For the year ended December 31st, 1949.

LIST OF STAFF.

The Staff of the Public Health Department consists of :—

Part-time Officers :—

F. J. H. MARTIN,

M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (Lond.), D.P.H. (Oxon),
Medical Officer of Health.

MRS. ELWORTHY, Clerk.

Whole-time Officers :—

A. G. OXLAND, L.R.I.B., A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.,

Sanitary Inspector.

L. W. EVES, A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.,

Additional Sanitary Inspector.

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area in acres	...	...	...	...	117,432
Population	...	...	...	...	8,978
Inhabited Houses	...	...	...	...	2,797
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	£29,086
Sum represented by a penny rate	...	...	...	...	£122 9s. 0d.

Vital Statistics.

		Males	Females	Total
LIVE BIRTHS—Legitimate	...	78	67	145
Illegitimate	...	2	2	4
				<hr/> 149

Rate per 1,000 population - 16·5

		Males	Females	Total
STILL BIRTHS—Legitimate	...	2	0	2
Illegitimate	...	0	0	0
				<hr/> 2

Rate per 1,000 total Live and Still Births 13·2

		Males	Females	Total
DEATHS	...	52	61	113

Death rate per 1,000 population 12·5

Deaths from Puerperal Causes.

Puerperal Sepsis	...	...	...	0
Other Puerperal Causes	...	...	...	0

Deaths of Infants under 1 year.

		Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	...	0	1	1
Illegitimate	...	0	0	0
				<hr/> 1

Rate per 1,000 Live Births - 6·7

Legitimate Infants per 1,000 Live Births 6·8

Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	...	...	0
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	...	0
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	...	...	...	0

The Table I give below shows the comparative figures for South Molton Rural District and England and Wales.

The local Death Rate is shown corrected by the areas comparability factor.

Rate per 1,000 population.			Death Rate per 1,000	Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births	
	Live Births	Still Births		Deaths under 1 year	Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under 2 years
South Molton R.D. ...	16·5	·23	11·1	6·7	0
England and Wales ...	16·7	·39	11·7	32·0	3·0

Causes of Death.

						Males	Females
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Cancer of Uterus	...	...	...	...	...	0	2
Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Cancer of Breast	...	...	...	...	...	0	2
Cancer of all other sites	...	...	...	...	...	7	6
Diabetes	...	...	...	...	...	1	0
Intracranial Vascular Lesions	...	...	...	...	...	6	9
Heart Disease	...	...	...	...	...	23	24
Other Diseases of Circulatory System	...	...	...	...	...	0	2
Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	...	0	1
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	2	4
Other Respiratory Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	0	1
Other Digestive Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	0	1
Nephritis	...	...	...	...	...	3	1
Congenital Malformation	...	...	...	...	...	0	1
Suicide	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Other Violent Causes	...	...	...	...	...	1	2
All other Causes	...	...	...	...	...	6	2
						52	61

Cases of Infectious Diseases notified in 1949

(in age groups, excluding Tuberculosis)

AGE Years	MEASLES		WHOOPIING COUGH		SCARLET FEVER		PNEUMONIA	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0-1 ...	—	1	2	2	—	—	—	—
1-2 ...	2	2	2	2	—	—	—	—
2-3 ...	2	2	4	7	—	—	—	—
3-4 ...	2	4	4	—	—	—	—	—
4-5 ...	2	1	5	6	1	—	—	—
5-10 ...	16	11	13	19	1	1	—	—
10-15 ...	5	2	3	5	—	—	2	—
15-20 ...	—	2	—	—	2	—	1	—
20-25 ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25-30 ...	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
TOTALS -	29	26	33	41	4	1	4	—
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Here is a Table showing the distribution of Infectious Diseases notified during 1949 (excluding Tuberculosis).

		MEASLES	WHOOPIING COUGH	SCARLET FEVER	PNEU- MONIA
Bishops Nympton	...	1	26	—	—
Burrington	...	—	9	—	—
Chittlehampton	...	5	—	—	—
Chittlehamholt	...	1	—	—	—
Chulmleigh	...	5	—	1	—
East Anstey	...	5	14	—	1
Filleigh	...	7	—	—	—
Knowstone	...	—	1	—	—
Molland	...	—	2	—	—
North Molton	...	4	9	—	—
Rackenford	...	10	5	—	—
Romansleigh	...	13	—	—	—
Rose Ash	...	1	6	—	—
West Buckland	...	—	—	2	3
West Anstey	...	—	1	—	—
Witheridge	...	3	—	2	—
		—	—	—	—
TOTALS	-	55	74	5	4
		—	—	—	—

Tuberculosis.

I am pleased to be able to report that no new cases were notified during 1949.

General Provisions of Health Services in the Area.

HOSPITALS.

1. TUBERCULOSIS.

Hawley Sanatorium, situated in the Borough of Barnstaple, has 28 beds.

2. MATERNITY CARE.

The Devon County Council is continuing to act as they did in 1948, as Agents of the Regional Hospital Board, until the Board has completed its own plans for the treatment of Maternity cases.

The South Molton Cottage Hospital is functioning as usual, and is now under the North Devon Hospital Group, and deals with a certain number of Maternity cases.

There is also a Ward of 15 beds, with a fully-qualified staff, at the North Devon Infirmary, Barnstaple, available for cases of doubt or difficulty.

3. ISOLATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The Tiverton Isolation Hospital is closed and the cases are now sent to the Bideford Isolation Hospital, which is situated just outside the Borough of Bideford. It is of recent construction and well-equipped in every way for the treatment of Infectious Diseases. It comprises 34 beds (six of which are in observation cubicles) and four cots.

4. SMALL POX.

The Small Pox Hospital to which any cases of Small Pox will be sent is at Upton Pyne. Telephone to Isolation Hospital, Whipton, Exeter, 67158, and this is the same number for the Ambulance.

5. GENERAL.

The South Molton Cottage Hospital, situated in the Borough, serves the Area. There are 12 beds for Medical, Surgical and Maternity Cases.

The North Devon Infirmary, situated in Barnstaple, also serves the Area and provides modern Medical and Surgical treatment.

In South Molton there are 29 beds available at Beech House for the Chronic Sick.

A Blood Bank has been established at North Devon Infirmary.

6. CLINICS AND TREATMENT CENTRES.

V.D. CLINIC.—This is held at the Annex of the North Devon Infirmary, Barnstaple.

SESSIONS.

		<i>Females.</i>	<i>Males.</i>
Mondays	-	4.0 p.m.	5.15 p.m.
Thursdays	-	4.30 p.m.	5.45 p.m.

CHEST CLINIC held at North Devon Infirmary.

Tuesdays	-	9.0 a.m. - 1.0 p.m. 2.0 p.m. - 4.0 p.m.	} Clinic and X-Ray Examinations.
Thursdays	-	9.0 a.m. - 1.0 p.m. 2.0 p.m. - 4.0 p.m.	
Fridays	-	9.0 a.m. - 1.0 p.m. 2.0 p.m. - 4.0 p.m.	} A.P. refills.

7. PROFESSIONAL NURSING IN THE HOMES.

There are eight District Nurses in the area.

8. MIDWIVES.

13 Midwives have notified their intention to practice in the South Molton Rural District.

9. LABORATORY FACILITIES.

The Laboratory is situated at 7, Dix's Field, Exeter, and is in charge of Dr. Moore. It is completely installed with the necessary equipment for bacteriological examinations of all kinds. Its Diagnostic and Consultative Services are available for all patients, and it undertakes the Analysis of Drinking Water and Milk.

This Service is extremely valuable and is widely used by the Medical Practitioners in your District.

10. IMMUNIZATION AGAINST DIPHTHERIA.

68 children received a course of primary injections and 147 children received a reinforcing injection.

11. VACCINATION.

44 children were vaccinated during the year.

12. AMBULANCE SERVICE.

Under Section 27 of the National Health Service Act, 1946, the Local Health Authority (*i.e.* the Devon County Council) is responsible for the provision of an Ambulance Service, and the Devon County Health Committee have arranged for this to be provided through the Agency of the St. John Ambulance Association. Under the scheme, an Ambulance Station has been established at South Molton. The District served is South Molton and South Molton Rural District.

I desire to thank Mr. Willey and Mr. Oxland for the help they have given me during the year.

F. J. H. MARTIN.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SANITARY INSPECTOR AND SURVEYOR TO THE SOUTH MOLTON RURAL AREA

For the year ended 31st December, 1949.

Water.

It is understood that main laying operations in this area on the part of the North Devon Water Board will shortly be commenced, and the completion of the first instalment of this scheme is looked forward to, as most of the troublesome places in this area are proposed to be covered by this first instalment.

At the 1st April next, the Board are assuming full control of the supplies in this area, and the Council's responsibilities in the matter will at that date cease.

During the past year, the usual troubles with water supplies have been experienced and a detailed statement in respect of each of the piped supplies is given hereunder.

CHULMLEIGH.—This township is supplied by means of a piped supply which is derived from a collecting area some little distance outside the town, supplemented by means of water derived from a borehole. The yield during dry periods of the year is greatly diminished from the collecting area and the borehole for some years past has produced considerably diminishing quantities. As in past years it has been necessary to restrict consumption by turning the supply off from the town for varying periods according to the time of the year, and during the driest periods water has not been available from the mains between the hours of 4 p.m. and 8 a.m. the following day. The water both from the collecting area and the borehole contains iron in solution in considerable quantities and aeration, sedimentation and slow sand filtration is resorted to for the removal of this, which is done quite successfully. The raw water has a plumbo-solvent action and before being passed into the mains it is made to flow through a neutralizing chamber where the p.H. value is raised to a satisfactory degree.

WITHERIDGE.—Water for this township is derived from three sources:

- (a) An adit which collects springs and through which the water flows into a reservoir.
- (b) A borehole, the yield from which is very restricted.
- (c) Springs on Woodford Moor from whence water is pumped to a water tower and thence to the reservoir.

The supply from these three sources has been sufficient for the needs of the place without the imposition of restrictions on consumption. The only treatment undertaken is that necessary to raise the p.H. value of the water from Woodford Moor.

KINGSNYMPTON.—It has been necessary to continue the haulage of water to this village from other sources. The sources have been varied according to the capacity of these to supply the local needs and this village in addition. Sometimes we have been indebted to our neighbours, the South Molton Borough Council, on other occasions supplies have come from North Molton and Brayford, and on yet others we have had to go as far away as Tiverton. The Council are grateful to the South Molton and Tiverton Borough Councils for the assistance they have received from them in this connection. The supply at Kingsnympton derived from a borehole is not only deficient in the dry months of the year but the whole year round. It is understood the North Devon Water Board are endeavouring to obtain more water locally to avoid the huge cost of carting water, and if sources can be found which will afford a supply during a part of the year only, a reasonable expenditure on these would be justified.

RACKENFORD.—In view of the necessity for the cartage of water to this village also, the North Devon Water Board have brought local wells into re-use, the water from which is chlorinated and pumped into the supply tank. These supplies may have to be augmented during the drier months of the year, but here again any reasonable expenditure bringing about a reduction of the necessity for haulage is well worth while.

BISHOPSNYMPTON.—The supply for this village is derived from a borehole, which during the past year has met all the demands of the consumers. The water contains iron in solution which is removed by aeration, sedimentation and slow sand filtration.

NORTH MOLTON.—The new service reservoir was put into use early in the year, but the yield from the springs decreased to such an extent that restrictions on consumption had to be imposed during the summer months.

BRAYFORD.—The new scheme for this village was brought into use early in the year, but unfortunately during the dry portion of the year, defects appeared in the pipeline conveying water from the stream to the hydram, which imposed limitations on the pumping capacity of the hydram. This resulted in a restricted supply, but had it not been for this defect, it is considered the supply would have been sufficient for the needs of the consumers without restriction.

CHITTLEHAMPTON.—There has been no change in the position and it remains substantially as I reported in my Annual Report for 1948.

GENERALLY.—The remainder of the district relies for its supply on small Estate Schemes and Wells.

25 samples of water were taken for examination during the year, particulars of which are as follows :—

13 from the privately owned supply at Chittlehampton, which being taken at monthly intervals, varied in quality, consumers being advised to boil all water before use.

Three from wells being used by the public, one with the object of ascertaining the amount of treatment required, where chlorination was subsequently resorted to, and two, to ascertain the quality of the water, when boiling before use was advised.

Two from wells on housing sites which were satisfactory.

Two from a privately operated School which showed a need for chlorination and the remainder from private property.

No samples other than those mentioned above were taken from piped supplies, as there was nothing to indicate any conditions which would reverse previous results.

No contamination of the publicly owned piped supplies has arisen necessitating any special action.

The table set out below shows the number of houses connected directly to the public mains, the estimated numbers of the population served by this means, the number of houses served by standpipes and the estimated number of the population served thereby.

Parish	Number of Houses supplied direct from Public Mains	Population supplied direct from Public Main Est.	Number of houses served by standpipes from Public Mains Est.	Population served by standpipes Est.
North Molton	143	442	35	105
Chulmleigh	232	696	1	2
Kingsnympton	59	177	1	2
Bishopsnympton	50	155	18	55
Rackenford	29	87	—	—
Witheridge	95	284	45	130
Charles	24	96	2	7
Total	632	1937	102	301

Particulars of work in connection with water supplies carried out during the year, are as follows :—

Number of inspections carried out in connection with private supplies	...	...	65
Number of visits to and inspections of public water supplies	...	...	108
Number of water supplies taken to houses from public mains	...	...	34
Number of new water supplies introduced to houses, other than from public mains	...	...	2
Number of cases in which the water supply to houses derived other than from public mains have been improved	...	...	1

Drainage and Sewerage.

Apart from sewers laid to cater for new housing schemes, no works of Sewerage or Sewage Disposal have been carried out during the year.

The Council have had under consideration the needs of the district regarding Sewerage and Sewage Disposal, and a Committee has made a tour of inspection. As a result of this, a firm of Civil Engineers is to be instructed to prepare schemes for dealing with the sewage of Chulmleigh and Chittlehampton. Inspections in connection with Sewerage and Sewage Disposal have been carried out during the year and particulars of drainage work are as follows :—

Number of new drains laid	...	...	26
Number of extensions to drains laid	...	...	9
Number of drains cleared	...	...	11

Closet Accommodation.

Number of new closets constructed	...	...	35
Number of earth closets converted to water closets	...	...	28
Number of new closet pans fixed	...	...	39
Number of flushing cisterns provided	...	...	35

Public Cleansing.

On the 1st January, a Central Refuse Collection Scheme was inaugurated, having for its object the collection of house refuse from the whole of the villages and hamlets in the area, and this has operated very satisfactorily. The whole of the many dumps previously existing in the area have been closed with the exception of the one at Bishopsnympton, where all the refuse is now tipped and the dump properly controlled.

Scavenging.

The scavenging of streets is practiced at Chulmleigh and Witheridge.

Nuisances.

Five nuisances have come to the notice of the department during the year, abatement in each case being obtained by informal action.

Eradication of Bed Bugs.

No premises were found to be infested with bed bugs.

Infectious Diseases.

Disinfection and Disinfestation.

The number of premises disinfected as the result of notifiable diseases was three.

One house was disinfected at the occupier's request as the result of death from a non-notifiable disease.

Four premises were disinfested, two from fleas and two from cockroaches.

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

Cowsheds and Dairies.

Forty-four inspections of cowsheds and dairies were made during the year prior to this section of the work being taken over by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries. No doubt, with the improved legislation available to the Minister, more rapid improvements will be seen in the facilities for the production of clean milk than hitherto.

Slaughterhouses.

No Slaughterhouses in the district are in use.

Meat.

74 lbs. of Imported Beef and 22 lbs. of English Mutton were condemned during the year, both for decomposition following bone taint.

Canned Foods.

The following canned foods were condemned :—

Evaporated Milk	...	...	19	cans
Salmon	...	...	2	„
Peas ...	...	...	3	„
Tomatoes	...	...	11	„
Pilchards	...	...	3	„
Jam ...	...	...	10	„
Carrots	...	...	1	can
Cooked Meats	...	...	12	cans
Fruit ...	...	...	7	„
Soup ...	...	...	2	„

Other Foods.

Part Barrel of Powdered Milk

Cheese 6 lbs.

Bakehouses.

There are twelve Bakehouses in the district which have been kept in a satisfactory condition and no complaints have been received concerning them.

Factories.

No defects were found in any of the Factories and the premises of outworkers inspected were satisfactory.

Housing.

Fourteen houses were completed during the year by the Council and three by private enterprise.

The following schemes were in course of execution at the end of the year :—

Bishopsnympton	...	...	4	houses
(Balance of a scheme of twelve)				
Filleigh	...	...	4	„
Chittlehamholt	...	...	6	„
Umberleigh	...	...	4	„

A tender has been negotiated for the erection of eight houses at Rackenford, but although this was accepted and approved in the early months of the year a start has not yet been made.

The scheme at Molland is still in abeyance, no Contractor being interested in the project.

The obtaining of tenders for Council Housing has become a real problem.

The number of visits and inspections to existing houses totalled 128. In 44 cases defects found were remedied by informal action, in three cases statutory notices under the Public Health Act, 1936, were served.

Building Licensing.

The number of applications for building licences received was 37, 35 of which were granted.

A. G. OXLAND, L.R.I.B.A., A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.,
Sanitary Surveyor & Inspector.

